

Excellent tandem reading with Morris West's spy-suspense novel, The Tower of Babel, reviewed above, is a new nonfiction volume on the machinations of the cloak-and-dagger confraternity.

Great True Spy Stories, edited by Allen Dulles (Kenneth Giniger publication in association with Harper & Row, 393 pages: \$6.95).

Reviewed by Clark Kinnaird.

"More than twenty years after his execution -- years of absolute silence about him on the part of the Soviets -- Sorge was 'rehabilitated'. The Soviets found it useful, in 1964, to glorify Sorge and his exploits to the extent of publishing an official state biography of him and issuing a memorial stamp on which his likeness appeared. With this, Sorge was not only recognized as a hero, but the profession of spying, for the Soviets at least, was officially hailed."

This is remarked in Allen Dulles' timely anthology of espionage nonfiction that eclipses in dramatic interest any James Bond espionage fiction concocted by Ian Fleming.

Parenthetically, the first substantial account published in the United States of Richard Sorge's activities in Japan for his Kremlin masters was ignored or viewed skeptically by reviewers of liberal persuasion, conditioned in belief there is no such thing as a Communist conspiracy in the United States and no world-wide Communist espionage and sabotage network. They are conditioned also to antipathy for General Douglas MacArthur: the first Sorge biography detailing the German's triumphs for the Red Army G-2 was written by MacArthur's chief of intelligence, Colonel Charles A. Willoughby.

Sorge, masquerading as a newspaperman, learned for the Red Army in October 1941, that Japan was not then preparing to attack Russia. Thus Russia was enabled to concentrate attention on its western front and adopt securely a pose of neutrality in the Pacific war the United States was forced to fight while providing the materiel that enabled the Red Armies to drive Hitler's forces from Russia. From that stance, of course, after the U.S. and its loyal allies had brought Japan to the point of surrender in August 1945, Russia declared war on Japan and swung events in China that delivered most of that empire into Mao-Communist hands.

Sorge qualifies eminently as super-spy according to the criterion of Mr. Dulles, the most accomplished director of the CIA. "The spy can achieve something great by acquiring some information that may change the course of a battle, or even the history of a nation...He may be a kind of man who does not arouse one's enthusiasm. For example, it is hard to find anything admirable in the person of Klaus Fuchs, but the results of his betrayal of our nuclear secrets to the Soviets may have changed the course of history."

Espionage elite are given attention in the Dulles cavalcade through excerpts from memoirs -- as in the cases of Jacques Casanova, Oleg Penkovsky, Igor Gouzenko and Aleksandr Kaznacheev -- or in chapters of authoritative second-hand accounts.

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(However, a chapter from a later book on Sorge by F.W. Deakin and G.R. Storry was chosen in preference to any excerpt from the Colonel Willoughby revelations.) Thanks to the detective work by Corey Ford embodied in A Peculiar Service (Little, Brown & Co.) and research by Leonard Falkner, real heroes of espionage in the American Revolution are accorded deserved credit. These do not include Nathan Hale, whose enshrinement as martyr was accomplished by Hannah Adams, New England regional historian, largely on hearsay. Mr. Dulles judges Hale was certainly admirable in his courage as he faced execution, but the fact remains that "he accomplished no intelligence objective on his ill-fated mission, that he was, in all likelihood, ill-prepared for it and possibly the wrong sort of man to carry it out."

That all sorts of men, when thoroughly schooled and then well-directed by spymasters, have proven great spies, is documented in the compilation made and annotated by Mr. Dulles with the notable assistance of Walter Pforzheimer and Howard Roman. Citations of great women spies are conspicuous by their absence from the volume, although reference is given Constance Babington-Smith's effective searches of aerophotographs for bombing targets. Mr. Dulles discounts claims made for the proficiency in intelligence services of the Dutch-French prostitute, Mata Hari, and rejects also the legendary accounts of Belle Boyd, Elizabeth Van Lew, and other nice ladies as spies for Union and Confederate armies during 1861-65.

The majority of inclusions in the volume relate to Soviet Russian espionage. The incumbent Red Czars themselves utilized the occasion of the unveiling of the British homosexual "Kim" Philby as a master hoodwinker of British and United States counterespionage to assert they have the best spies in the world. Meanwhile, they had acknowledged Colonel Rudolf Abel, who was trapped by the FBI in Brooklyn in 1957, as a hero of the Soviet Union.

Why the exaltation of Sorge, Abel, Philby and their Red peers after many years of refusal to acknowledge the existence of espionage that penetrates every nation in the world? Mr. Dulles advances a theory that the changed attitude in Moscow ensues from "some need--in the face of so many cases of Soviet agents captured and unmasked during the postwar decades--to bolster and glamorize the profession, possibly because in Russia it has fallen into disrepute, and the Soviets were finding it more difficult to recruit people to work clandestinely for the U.S.S.R. Apparently, the Soviets had become concerned about the 'image' of espionage itself. Whether they cared about Sorge, he was clearly a convenient peg on which to hang certain sentiments about a field of activity which, for five decades, has been a mainstay of Soviet policy."

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Regardless of the political implications of any of the contents --such as the clandestine means by which the Republican nominee in 1944, Thomas E. Dewey, was induced to soft-pedal questioning of the Roosevelt administration's conduct of the war--practically all of the book is stirring entertainment for spy-suspense, adventure fans. It should quickly be a bestseller.

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LITERARY ALMANAC

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SUN., Mar. 10--1804: St. Louis, Mo., was under three sovereign flags within two days. Spanish formally transferred Louisiana Territory there to French, who next day turned it over to U.S.A. agent. 1858: Henry W. Fowler, author of the classic Dictionary of Modern English Usage, was born. It was first published in 1926 when, therefore, Fowler was sixty-eight.

MON., Mar. 11--1302: Marriage of Romeo Montague and Juliet Capulet was recorded at Citadella Church of Minorites at Padua. 1748: George Washington, aged sixteen, started on his first surveying expedition into western Virginia. 1794: Congress made the first provision for a U.S. Navy, in authorizing construction of six frigates to fight French privateers.

TUES., Mar. 12--1685: George Berkeley, philosopher, was born. 1873: Stewart Edward White, novelist, was born. 1888: Legendary blizzard of '88 swept down New England into New York. 1917: Socialist coalition revolution, which effected downfall of the Romanoff empire, broke out in Russia.

WED., Mar. 13--1639: Newtown (Cambridge) fixed as site of college that was to be named for Rev. John Harvard, a benefactor. 1733: Joseph Priestley was born. 1791: First part of The Rights of Man, by Thomas Paine, was published. 1813: Boston Daily Advertiser first was issued.

THURS., Mar. 14--1879: Albert Einstein was born, at Ulm, Germany. 1878: Maxim Gorki was born. 1883: Karl Marx died, aged sixty-four. 1885: World premiere at London of the Gilbert & Sullivan operetta, The Mikado. 1932: George Eastman of Kodak fame killed himself, leaving a note, "My work is done. Why wait?"

FRI., Mar. 15--44 B.C.: Julius Caesar was assassinated. 1767: Andrew Jackson, 7th President, was born. 1783: Mutiny broke out in Washington's army at New Windsor, N.Y., over nonpayment of compensation. (The Treasury was empty.) 1917: Abdication day of Czar Nicholas II of the bestseller, Nicholas and Alexandra, by Robert K. Massie (Atheneum).

SAT., Mar. 16--1618: Richard Burbage, original performer in Shakespeare's plays, died. Solitary inscription on his gravestone: Exit Burbage. 1751: James Madison, 4th President, was born. 1802: U.S. Military Academy was founded at West Point, N.Y.

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